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INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 2665  
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RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 1256  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2054  
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 2410  
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 2834  
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 5262  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000166

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR B.WALCH  
DRL FOR N. WILETT  
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU  
ADDIS ABABA FOR ACSS  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR E. LOKEN AND L. DOBBINS

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SUBJECT: UN A/SG URGES DONORS TO DO MORE IN ZIMBABWE

Classified By: Ambassador James D. McGee for reason 1.4 (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: During a February 25 breakfast meeting with U.S. and UK Ambassadors, UN Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs Catherine Bragg urged donors to expand their humanitarian assistance to Zimbabwe to include recovery activities. While she acknowledged the appropriateness of existing donor principles, she suggested that donors significantly expand engagement regardless of the GOZ's performance. We hope she delivered a different message to the GOZ. END SUMMARY.

12. (U) On February 25, Ambassador hosted a breakfast with UN Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs Catherine Bragg. Also in attendance were members of Bragg's delegation, UK Ambassador Andrew Pocock, a representative of the UK Department for International Development (DFID), USAID Director and DCM. Bragg visited Zimbabwe for five days to assess the humanitarian crisis and response efforts.

13. (C) Bragg, a Canadian, made it clear she viewed outreach to other donors as a critically important part of her mission. She said that her message to the international community was that it was necessary to interpret the humanitarian imperative broadly in addressing Zimbabwe's crisis, and to include assistance for recovery in humanitarian efforts. Bragg characterized her meetings with President Mugabe and other officials as the "easy part" of her mission; her meetings with bilateral donor representatives were the "hard part." (She noted that Mugabe was "charming" in his meeting with her.)

14. (C) Ambassador and UK Ambassador Pocock stressed that the donors' agreed principles for reengagement (humanitarian access, commitment to economic stabilization, rule of law, respect for human rights/ democratic norms and commitment to elections) represent a minimum necessary foundation for accountability and successful recovery. Bragg acknowledged that the principles are appropriate, but suggested that the plight of Zimbabwe's people trumped all other considerations.

15. (C) The conversation became unusually direct after Bragg responded to USAID Director's point about the critical need for effective monitoring and evaluation of assistance. Bragg suggested that the UN system could help with monitoring to reassure donors, but she felt that the time was not opportune to evaluate on-going cholera assistance. Ambassador noted that the UN Zimbabwe country team lacks credibility with the donor community and has been viewed as too close to government. Bragg defended Humanitarian Coordinator and UN Resrep Dr. Zacarias, claiming that his intensive efforts were instrumental in restoring the NGO community's ability to carry out field operations in late August 2008. She conceded that Zacarias and other members of the team were not the UN system's best and brightest and said New York is trying to recruit strong candidates to replace Zacarias and other outgoing heads of UN agencies in Harare. Qoutgoing heads of UN agencies in Harare.

16. (C) COMMENT: Zimbabwe's humanitarian crisis is a man-made emergency and fundamental policy reform is essential for sustainable improvement in the basic conditions of the lives of Zimbabwe's people. We hope that Bragg was forceful on this point in her meetings with Zimbabwean leaders, and that the impression she left with us (that convincing donors to open the floodgates was her primary mission) was misleading. This was the UN's second high-level visit in recent weeks, following the January trip of UNICEF Director Ann Veneman, and we fear the GOZ exploited her visit to its own ends as well. END COMMENT.

MCGEE